DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 398 477 CG 027 184

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TITLE Organizational Commitment and Job Satisfaction among State Agency Rehabilitation Counselors: Idaho.
PUB DATE Mar 95
NOTE 13p.; For national results, see CG 027 177. For studies at the state level, see CG 027 178-204.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Counselor Qualifications; *Counselors; *Employee Attitudes; Employment Patterns; Job Performance; *Job Satisfaction; Occupational Surveys; *Personnel Data; Quality of Working Life; *Rehabilitation Counseling; Work Attitudes; Work Environment
IDENTIFIERS *Idaho; Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire

ABSTRACT

The job satisfaction and organizational commitment of rehabilitation counselors working in public rehabilitaton in Idaho are the focus of this study. Because of the small population size, responses from counselors working in both the general (n=64) and blind (n=8) agencies were combined. Forty-two surveys were returned. Job satisfaction was measured using the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire. The three components of organizational commitment (affective, normative, and continuance) were examined using the Organizational Commitment Scales. Potential predictor variables examined were: (1) years of service; (2) age; (3) education level; (4) Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) status; (5) conscientiousness; (6) initiative; (7) cooperation; and (8) attendance/punctuality. Affective commitment has been linked to superior performance as has normative commitment. Continuance commitment has been linked to less than ideal performance. As a group, Idaho's public rehabilitation counselors seem to be operating rather equally from all components of commitment. If Idaho's administration wishes to focus on reducing continuance commitment, they are referred to the results from the national sample which identifies behaviors predictive of affective and normative commitment. Contains two appendices: (1) Job Satisfaction Items and (2) Organizational Commitment Items. (JBJ)

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ED 398 477

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT AND JOB SATISFACTION AMONG STATE AGENCY REHABILITATION COUNSELORS: IDAHO

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT AND JOB SATISFACTION AMONG STATE AGENCY REHABILITATION COUNSELORS: IDAHO

This study examined the job satisfaction and organizational commitment of rehabilitation counselors working in public (state/federal) rehabilitation in Idaho.

Demographic Information

Because of the small population size, responses from counselors working in both the general (n = 64) and blind (n = 8) agencies were combined. Forty-two (42) out of seventy-two (72) surveys were returned. The following demographic questions were asked:

1. How long had the counselors worked with their agency?
2. How old were the counselors?
3. Did the counselors have masters or bachelor's degrees?
4. Were the counselors Certified Rehabilitation Counselors?

The counselors ranged in years worked as a counselor in Idaho from 2 months to 24 years, with a mean of 9.89 years. They ranged in age from 29 to 56 years with a mean age of 42.81. Twenty-three (23) of the counselors had master's degrees or higher while nineteen (19) reported having bachelor's degrees. Twenty-four (24) counselors indicated that they were Certified Rehabilitation Counselors while eighteen (18) said they were not.

I. JOB SATISFACTION

The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire developed by Weiss, Dawis, England, & Lofquist, (1967) was used to measure job satisfaction. Cook, Hepworth, Wall, & Warr (1982) describe the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire as a sound measure of overall job satisfaction. The questionnaire uses a 5-point Likert scale with the following values:

1 = Very dissatisfied
2 = Dissatisfied
3 = I cannot decide whether I am satisfied or not
4 = Satisfied
5 = Very satisfied

A copy of the items can be found in Appendix A. Upon the completion of data collection, two items were deleted from the instrument: (a) being able to do things that do not go against my decisions, and (b) the chance to tell people what to do. Item a was deleted because the majority of respondents felt it was too ambiguously worded. Item b was deleted because the overwhelming majority of respondents indicated that their jobs did not provide opportunities for supervision and that, when working with clients, it was not part of their responsibilities/philosophy to "tell others what to do." With the deletion of these items, possible scores could range from 18-90. Using Cronbach's Alpha, a new reliability coefficient was calculated. Reliability was found to be .87.

The range of scores from Idaho's counselors was from 35-88 with a mean of 70.39 and a standard deviation of 11.93. This compared with a national sample mean of 66.86 and a standard deviation of 10.90.

Data Analysis

The sample size was too small to conduct data analysis other than ranges, means, and standard deviations.

II. ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

Organizational commitment refers to the dedication that employees feel toward the organizations for which they work. It has been defined as "the strength of an individual's

identification with and involvement in a particular organization" (Porter, Steers, Mowday, & Boulian, 1974, p. 604). It also has been related to the energy that employees expend on behalf of the organizations for which they work.

Meyer & Allen (1991) conceptualized organizational commitment as having three components: (a) affective, (b) normative, and (c) continuance. Affective commitment refers to the emotional attachment that an individual has for the organization in which he or she works. Normative commitment refers to the individual's attachment to an organization because of values relating to loyalty. Continuance commitment refers, primarily, to an individual's attachment to the organization for which he or she works because the costs of leaving the organization would be too high. Workers operating from an affective model of commitment expend energy on behalf of the organization because they *want* to. Workers operating from a normative model of commitment expend energy on behalf of the organization because the believe they *should*. Persons in the continuance model expend energy on behalf of their organizations because they feel they *have* to.

Affective, normative, and continuance commitment can occur simultaneously, although they are individual constructs (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1991). The effects of each component on job performance, however, may differ. Meyer et al. (1989) stated that, when the primary commitment to an organization is affective, the organization may benefit in terms of "superior" performance. Normative commitment may also be positively reflected in work performance. When the primary commitment is continuance, relatively poor performance may be evident.

This study examined the affective, normative, and continuance commitment of rehabilitation counselors using the Organizational Commitment Scales developed by Allen and Meyer (1989). Items can be found in Appendix B. Previous research using these scales has shown relative independence among the three components of organizational commitment, although a relationship may exist

between affective and normative commitment. From a current sample of over 2,000 rehabilitation counselors, the following correlations were found:

	Affective	Normative	Continuance
Affective	1.00	.50**	.05
Normative	.50**	1.00	.06
Continuance	.05	.06	1.00

**p< .01

A significant relationship was found between affective and normative commitment. The magnitude of this relationship, however, is not sufficient to conclude that they are measuring the same construct. Previous researchers using these scales have found reliability coefficients ranging from .74 to .89 (Affective), .69 to .84 (Continuance), and .69 to .79 (Normative). From the national sample, the following reliability coefficients were found: Affective (.66); Continuance (.75); Normative (.70). The following research question was answered:

What are the affective, normative, and continuance commitment levels of state agency rehabilitation counselors in Idaho?

For each area of commitment, scores on this instrument can range from 8-56. The following scores were obtained:

Affective Commitment	Mean = 36.56	SD = 7.28	n = 41
Normative Commitment	Mean = 34.02	SD = 8.41	n = 40
Continuance Commitment	Mean = 35.92	SD = 7.56	n = 40

While mean differences are negligible, Idaho's public rehabilitation counselors were highest in affective (emotional) commitment followed, respectively, by continuance and normative commitment. In the national sample, state agency counselors' highest level of commitment was continuance. These were followed by affective and normative commitment.

SUMMARY

Affective commitment has been linked to superior performance as has normative commitment. Continuance commitment has been linked to less than ideal performance. As a group, Idaho's public rehabilitation counselors seem to be operating rather equally from all components of commitment. If Idaho's administration wishes to focus on reducing continuance commitment, they are referred to the results from the national sample which identifies behaviors predictive of affective and normative commitment.

APPENDIX A

JOB SATISFACTION ITEMS

On my present job, this is how I feel about:

1. Being able to keep busy all the time
2. The chance to work alone on the job
3. The chance to do different things from time to time
4. The chance to be "somebody" in the community
5. The way my boss handles his/her workers
6. The competence of my supervisor in making decisions
7. Being able to do things that do not go against my decisions*
8. The way my job provides for steady employment
9. the chance to do things for other people
10. The chance to tell people what to do*
11. The way company policies are put into practice
12. My pay and the amount of work I do
13. The chances for advancement on the job
14. The freedom to use my own judgement
15. The working conditions
16. The way my co-workers get along with each other
17. The praise I get for doing a good job
18. The feeling of accomplishment I get from the job

*Deleted from final analysis

APPENDIX B

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT ITEMS

Affective Commitment

I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this agency

I enjoy discussing my agency with people outside of it

I really feel as if this agency's problems are my own

I think I could easily become as attached to another agency as I am to this one (Reversed)

I do not feel like "part of the family" at my agency (Reversed)

I do not feel "emotionally attached" to this agency (Reversed)

This agency has a great deal of personal meaning for me

I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my agency (Reversed)

Normative Commitment

I think that people these days move from company to company too often

I do not believe that a person must always be loyal to his or her organization (Reversed)

Jumping from organization to organization does not seem at all unethical to me (Reversed)

One of the major reasons I continue to work for this agency is that I believe loyalty is important and therefore feel a sense of moral obligation to remain

If I got another offer for a better job elsewhere, I would not feel it was right to leave my agency

I was taught to believe in the value of remaining loyal to one organization

Things were better in the days when people stayed with one organization for most of their careers

I do not think that wanting to be a "company man" or "company woman" is sensible anymore (Reversed)

Continuance Commitment

I am not afraid of what might happen if I quit my job without having another one line up (Reversed)

It would be very hard for me to leave my agency right now, even if I wanted to

Too much in my life would be disrupted if I decided to leave my agency right now

It would not be too costly for me to leave my agency in the near future (Reversed)

Right now, staying with my agency is a matter of necessity as much as desire

I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving my agency

One of the few negative consequences of leaving this agency would be the scarcity of available alternatives

One of the major reasons why I continue to work for this agency is that leaving would require considerable personal sacrifice-another organization may not match the overall benefits here

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